

# The LOVER.

By MARMADUKE MYRTLE, *Gent.*

*Linquenda Tellus & Domus & Placens Uxor. Hor.*

Saturday, March 13. 1714.

**I**N the Calculation of a Man's Happiness in Life, there is no one Circumstance which ought more carefully to be considered, than the Object of one's Love. As that will certainly take full Possession of the Heart, except it be resisted in time, it is the utmost Madness to let your Affections fix where you cannot expect the Approbation of your Reason. If a Man does not take this Precaution, his Days will pass away with frivolous Pleasures and solid Vexations, a Man's own Reflections only must soften his Misfortunes and Afflictions; but he can have no recourse, no help from his cooler Thoughts, who dare not admit his Reason into his Council. We cannot look back upon the Pleasures which flow from loose Desire but with Remorse and Contrition, and therefore the Mind cannot recur to them on occasions of Distress to borrow Comfort; but honourable Love, tho' it has all the Softness and Tenderness which Imagination can form, can be admitted under the severest Affliction, and is the best Instrument to break its Force; but as it breaks the Force of Sorrow, it does not do it by wholly removing the Affliction, but rather by diversifying it. He that is under any great Calamity loses the Sense of it, as it touches himself; and his Affliction, which, perhaps, would have had in it the Terrors of Fear and Shame, is, by the neglect of his own part in the Affair, turned only into Pity and Compassion for a tender Wife who participates it. This kind of Concern carries an Antidote to its Poison, and the Merit of her regard to him has something in it so pleasing, that the Soul feels a secret Consolation in the Happiness of being possessed of such a Companion, at the same time that he thinks her Participation is the greatest Article of his Distress. In all Ages Men who have differed from the Sentiments of the World, when they have been precipitated by Fury and

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Party, and been sacrificed to the Rage of them, have under Trials of this sort sunk under their Distresses, or behaved themselves decently in them, according to the Support which they have met with from the Domestick Partners of their Affliction. This is an Opportunity to vent the secret Pangs of Heart to one whose Love makes nothing ungrateful, or, to utter the Sense of Injuries, where that appears Conscious Virtue, which to any other Audience would sound like Pride and Arrogance.

There are indeed very tender things to be recited from the <sup>writings</sup> of Poetical Authors, which express the utmost Tenderness in an amorous Commerce; but indeed I never read any thing which, to me, had so much Nature and Love, as an Expression or two in the following Letter; but the Reader must be let into the Circumstance of the Matter, to have a right Sense of it. The Epistle was written by a Gentlewoman to her Husband, who was condemned to suffer Death: The unfortunate Catastrophe happened at *Exeter* in the Time of the late Rebellion. A Gentleman, whose Name was *Penruddock*, to whom the Letter was written, was Barbarously Sentenced to die without the least Appearance of Justice. He asserted the Illegality of his Enemies Proceedings, with a Spirit worthy his Innocence, and the Night before his Death his Lady writ to him the Letter which I so much admire, and is as follows.

Mrs. *Penruddock's* last Letter to her Husband.

*My dear Heart,*

**M**Y sad parting was so far from making me forget you, that I scarce thought upon myself since, but wholly upon you. Those dear Embraces which I yet feel, and shall never lose, being

ing the faithful Testimonies of an indulgent Husband, have charm'd my Soul to such a Reverence of your Remembrance, that were it possible I would, with my own Blood, cement your dead Limbs to Life again; and (with Reverence) think it no Sin to rob Heaven a little while longer of a Martyr. Oh my Dear! you must now pardon my Passion, this being my last (oh fatal Word) that ever you will receive from me, and know, that untill the last Minute that I can imagine you shall live, I will sacrifice the Prayers of a Christian, and the Groans of an afflicted Wife. And when you are not (which sure by Sympathy I shall know) I shall wish my own Dissolution with you, that so we may go Hand in Hand to Heaven. 'Tis too late to tell you what I have, or rather have not done for you; how turn'd out of Doors because I came to beg Mercy; the Lord lay not your Blood to their Charge. I would fain Discourse longer with you but dare not; Passion begins to drown my Reason, and will rob me of my *devoirs*, which is all I have left to serve you, adieu therefore ten thousand times my dearest Dear; and since I must never see you more, take this Prayer, May your Faith be so strengthened, that your Constancy may continue, and then I know Heaven will receive you; whither Grief and Love will in a short time (I hope) translate

My Dear,



Your sad, but constant Wife even to  
love your Ashes when Dead,

Arundel Penruddock.

' May the 3d, 1655, 11 a-Clock at Night. Your Children beg your Blessing, and present their Duties to you.

I do not know that I have ever read any thing so affectionate as the Line, *Those dear Embraces which I yet feel*.

Mr. Penruddock's Answer has an equal Tenderness which I shall recite also, that the Town may dispute whether the Man or the Woman, expressed themselves the more kindly, and strive to imitate them in less Circumstances of Distress, for from all no Couple upon Earth are exempt.

Mr. Penruddock's last Letter to his Lady.

Dearest best of Creatures.

I Had taken leave of the World when I received Yours: It did at once recal my Fondness for Life, and enable me to resign it. As I am sure I shall leave none behind me like you, which weakens my Resolution to part from you, so when I reflect I am going to a Place where there are none but such as you, I recover my Courage. But Fondness breaks in upon me, and as I would not have my Tears flow to-morrow, when your

Husband, and the Father of our dear Babes, is a Publick Spectator. Do not think meanly of me, that I give way to Grief, or separate, when I see my Sand run to run, and I want a few Hours am to leave you Helpless, and exposed to the Merciless and insatiable, that have wrongfully put me to a shameful Death, and will object that Shame to my poor Children. I thank you for all your Goodness to me, and will endeavour so to die, as to do nothing unworthy that Virtue in which we have mutually supported each other, and for which I desire you not Repine that I am first to be rewarded, since you ever preferred me to your self in all other things; afford me, with Cheerfulness, the Precedence in this.  
' I desire your Prayers in the Article of Death, for my own will then be offered for You and Yours.

J. Penruddock.

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